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Abstract

A yearly report on the migrant farm worker situation in Wisconsin evaluates the year 1968 in relation to past years and makes projections for the future. Comparisons are made of trends in year-round employment practices, seasonal food processing, the cherry industry, and the cucumber industry. The report includes a discussion on the social aspects of the migrant. Evaluations and comparisons are made regarding housing, wages, and the availability of community services. The document includes statistical charts reflecting the many changes that are taking place in the world of the migrant farm worker in Wisconsin. (DB)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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ED033815

WISCONSIN

ANNUAL FARM LABOR REPORT

1968

Food Processing and Agriculture

RC003843

WISCONSIN STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
A Division of the Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations

WSES-3035

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THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

The United States has been the Land of Opportunity for more people than any other nation in history. While stories of rags to riches are common in America, of even greater significance is the rise of the great middle class - - - not to riches, but to relative affluence. No greater tribute can be paid to our system of private enterprise and public education than the simple recognition of the key roles these two institutions have played in making America the Land of Opportunity.

But it is possible to be misled about the nature of our society if we permit ourselves to dwell too much upon our accomplishments and too little upon the challenges that face us. This nation has been a melting pot of all races, creeds and nationalities. It is too easy to forget that until recently we have been little more than a conglomerate of nationality groups living in strained, and sometimes violent, co-existence. Old timers can recall the rivalries, mistrust and even hatred between groups that lived in close proximity. Today, however, members of the great middle class are barely conscious of the ancestry of their friends and acquaintances, ethnic lines have blurred, and we believe we are above the clannishness that characterized the world of our parents and grandparents. But - are we?

Are we perhaps one giant clan known commonly and somewhat erroneously as White Anglo Saxon? Is our relationship with other ethnic groups still about on a par with the relationships between earlier clans? Every group feels that its value system, its way of life, is God-given or somehow imbued with moral righteousness and that all who differ with it are mis-guided. It is sometimes difficult to see where we, today, are any different in this respect from any other ethnic groups, large or small, either living now or only in the pages of history. We feel comfortable about those who share our values, live our way of life, and speak our language. And we are uneasy about those who differ from that pattern.

The greater difficulties facing a minority group member who is trying to "make it" in society today, as compared to a generation or two ago, are often described in terms of employment problems - - the decline in the number of unskilled jobs available. A point often overlooked, however, is the relative size of the minority group to the group into which it is being integrated. The "melting" of the nationality groups of our parents and grandparents into one unified body was a merger of a variety of groups, one with another, without great differences in size or social status. Contrast that situation with the problem of today's minority groups, who are outnumbered several times over and who

are universally in a lower socio-economic class than the greater society. This magnifies many times the difficulties in becoming a part of the larger society. The increased resistance by the larger society- - increased resistance not in terms of individual attitudes, which may be even somewhat more enlightened than earlier generations, but increased by its size and solidarity - - is probably the greatest single cause of the friction, the riots, and disruption that America feels today.

Despite the great difficulties confronting minority groups who want to become a part of today's society, they are achieving intergration. The 1968 Annual Farm Labor Report is dedicated to the migrant workers who are "making it" today. It is intended as a tribute to the hope and determination displayed by these people as they slowly and steadily work their way into the mainstream of American life.

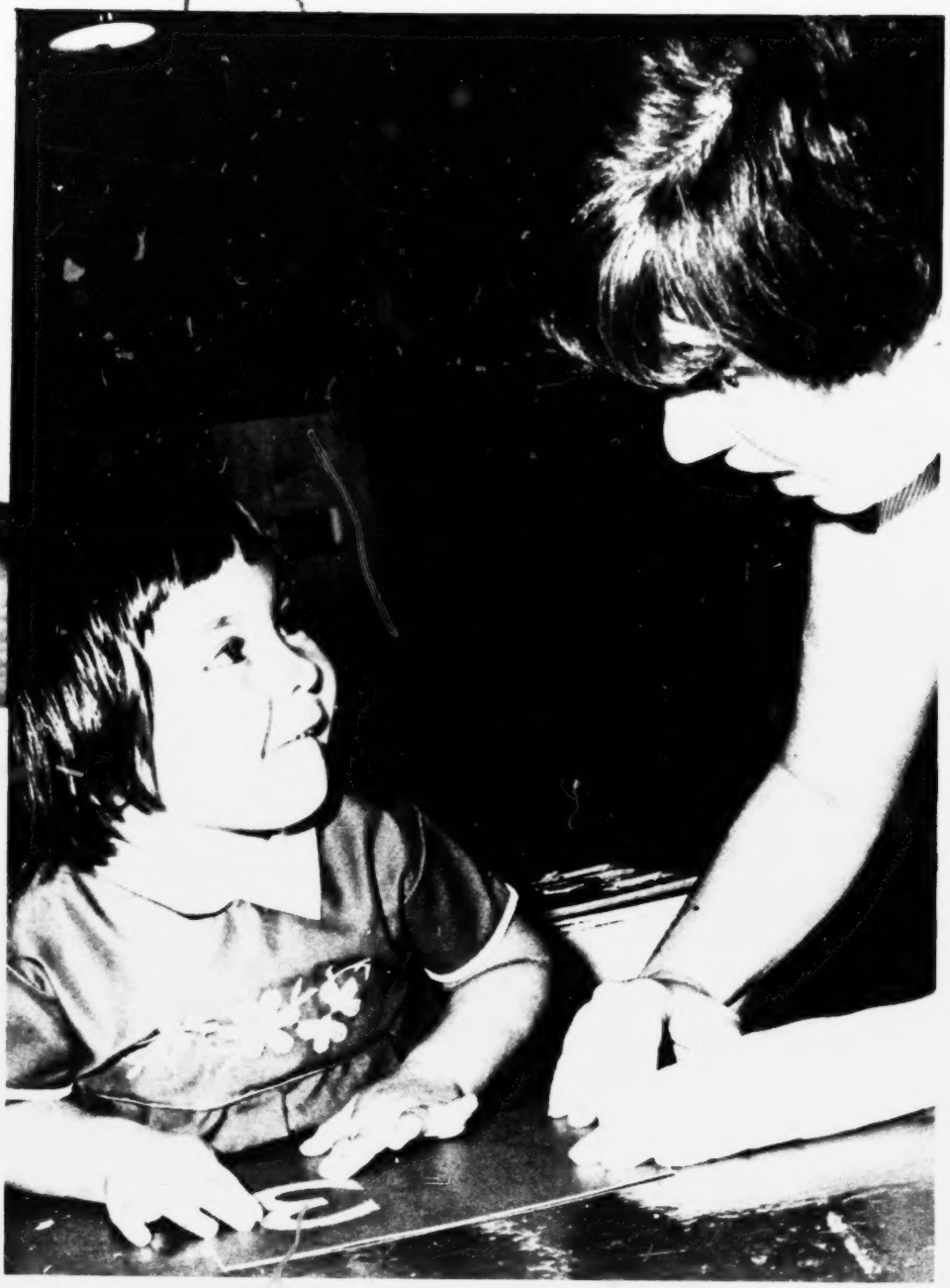
The front cover and the next several pages depict this remarkable transition.

* * * * * *

AUTOMOTIVE MACHINE SHOP is one of many vocational skills taught students in the UMOS program, as part of the adult basic education classes at Milwaukee Vocational school.

(Below) A youngster in the UMOS day care program is learning her numbers with the help of a teacher who is a certified Montessori instructor.

A UMOS student who took a special course in food preparation at the Kenosha Technical Institute.



A former migrant worker has learned to build and repair stringed instruments.

UMOS student learns to use a language lab in Madison unit.

The United States has been the Land of Opportunity for more people than any other nation in history. While stories or rags to riches are common in America, of even greater significance is the rise of the great middle class - - not to riches, but to relative affluence. . . . . Despite the great difficulties confronting minority groups who want to become a part of today's society, they are achieving integration.

POST SEASON FARM LABOR REPORT

ES-225

1968

PREPARED BY

FARM LABOR SERVICE

WISCONSIN STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

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THE WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, LABOR and HUMAN RELATIONS

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ES-225 Wisconsin, 1968

ANNUAL FARM LABOR REPORT

PART I - ANNUAL SUMMARY

PLANNING

Consistent with the Wisconsin State Employment Service's efforts to provide better service to the disadvantaged, the Farm Labor Service unit assigned top priority to the following objectives in 1968:

1. Expand opportunities outside the migrant stream through cooperation with migrant resettlement and training agencies and direct assistance to migrants wishing to relocate.

2. Continue services to individual migrants through the Concerted Migrant Services program.

3. Implement the Federal migrant housing code and assist the Wisconsin Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations Building and Safety Division in efforts to improve migrant housing.

4. Establish closer working ties with enforcement agencies charged with protecting the interests of migrants.

5. Encourage employers to upgrade their personnel practices and develop ways and means of stabilizing their work force.

CHANGES IN ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

During recent years the many added responsibilities of the employment service and the new concepts of service have put such pressures on district office staff time as to make obsolete our traditional pattern of staffing for farm representatives. Farm personnel were allocated to district offices in fractions of a position based partly on activity volume and partly on budgetary guidelines. The average district office farm representative invariably had many additional "non-farm" duties and it became extremely rare under this system that he could aggressively promote his farm program responsibilities.

As a result of the Federal mandate to re-direct employment service resources to serve the disadvantaged, a large number of questions were raised by district offices concerning the amount of time required to operate the migrant program. Offices tended to feel that their role was primarily "paper-shuffling" and they questioned the extent to which this really contributed to the welfare of the migrant.

Based on these and other considerations, the decision was reached to consolidate all employment service migrant activities, except some of those occurring in the Green Bay district, under state office control.

A timetable was set up for the gradual changeover to a centralized operation. By the end of the 1968 season the changeover was nearly complete. One state office coordinator stationed in Beaver Dam assumed responsibility for all migrant activities in the food processing industry including those in the Green Bay district. Another state office coordinator stationed in the Oshkosh-Wautoma area assumed responsibility for all activities involving migrants employed in agriculture except in the Green Bay district. During the peak of the season, the Beaver Dam and Wautoma coordinators were supplemented by seasonal field staff.

The Green Bay district retained responsibility for all of its traditional migrant activities except food processing. All district offices retained responsibility for service to year-round agricultural employers and local recruitment for seasonal agricultural and food processing employers. Seasonal farm labor offices in Wautoma, Sturgeon Bay, Sister Bay and Oconto were continued under the new organization.

The state office farm labor staff now consists of a chief, an assistant, a migrant relations specialist, two field coordinators, and a secretary. Research analysts are assigned to farm labor reporting, but are under the supervision of the Bureau of Research and Statistics. Five seasonal employees were added to the state office staff again this summer as migrant specialists in the Concerted Migrant Services program. Six Spanish-speaking seasonal employees were hired to inspect migrant housing and instruct migrants in sanitation practices.

PRE-SEASON AND IN-SEASON MEETINGS

At local and state levels, farm labor service personnel met and worked with the following organizations and agencies:

University Extension Service
Governor's Committee on Migratory Labor
Obreros Unidos
United Migrant Opportunity Services
Labor Standards Division
Industrial Safety and Buildings Division
Committee on Agricultural Manpower
Wisconsin Canners and Freezers Association
Department of Agriculture
Department of Health and Social Services
Equal Rights Division
Unemployment Compensation Division
Department of Public Instruction
Department of Natural Resources
Board of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education
Workmen's Compensation Division
Department of Revenue
Human Relations Councils
Citizens Opportunity Services
U. S. Border Patrol
Local Chamber of Commerce
Various county welfare departments
County Sheriffs departments
Local police departments
Various church groups

TRENDS IN YEAR-ROUND EMPLOYMENT

According to Department of Agriculture figures, the number of Wisconsin farms has dropped from a high of 200,000 in 1935 to a low of 116,000 in 1968. Farm acreage has dropped from over 23 million acres in 1953 to under 21 million acres in 1968. The average size of Wisconsin farms has increased however, from 145 acres in 1953 to 179 acres in 1968.

Of the 116,000 farms in the state, over 68,000 are dairy farms. In the past decade the number of Wisconsin dairy farms has decreased at a faster rate than other types of farms in the state. Milk cow numbers have also been declining since 1956 and are the lowest in 44 years (under 2 million cows by early 1968). This decline has slowed somewhat in recent years however, and a steady upswing in output per cow has maintained total production at high levels pushing Wisconsin's share of the national market to around 16% in 1968.

Labor shortages, labor costs and loss of sons to industry, college and military service rank high on the list of reasons for dairy farmers quitting farming altogether or turning to beef and grain operations.

In dairy farming as well as other farm operations requiring year-round workers, assistance by the Wisconsin State Employment Service has been hampered by a chronic shortage of qualified workers and the inability of many of these employers to compete in the open labor market. Based on 1964 Agricultural Census figures there are only 2,000 to 4,000 farm employers in the state with sufficient gross income to compete against the non-agricultural segment of the economy for labor. Obviously only a small portion of these employers have openings in any given year.

The Wisconsin State Employment Service has experienced little measurable success in rendering effective service to year-round farm employers. Attempts were made during 1967 and 1968 to identify the more competitive farm employers, assess their needs, document data on successful employment practices and lay the groundwork for a good job development program. Even with the prior assumption that placements would not return to the level of former years, the results so far, have been discouraging as Wisconsin State Employment Service non-seasonal agricultural placements continued to slide from 1,743 in 1962 to around 400 in 1968.

TRENDS IN SEASONAL FOOD PROCESSING

Large capital investments by many companies in the food processing industry have forced diversification and lengthening of the canning season in Wisconsin to make maximum use of plant capacities. This development coupled with a very tight local labor market has stimulated a trend toward employing more migrants at in-plant jobs for a longer period of time. An interesting exception to this trend is a new multi-million dollar food processing plant under construction in the heart of the Wisconsin canning belt by a major west coast growers cooperative. This plant will process peas and sweet corn starting in 1969 and plans to rely entirely upon local labor.

A moderate demand for seasonal canning factory workers begins to build in June with the start of the pea pack. More than 90% of the food processing work force at that time is composed of local workers. Only a few hundred migrants are used in this crop activity. Underemployment becomes a frequent problem among migrants who have been recruited too early or came up on their own too soon. The policy of many canners in recent years of minimizing overtime payrolls by operating two shifts instead of one and recruiting out-of-state workers accordingly has tended to compound the problem.

By mid-July over 2,100 out-of-state workers are employed in food processing plants canning peas, beans and other vegetables. This represents 20% of the total food processing work force.

Work force requirements take another jump in early August when sweet corn processing gets underway. At the peak of the food processing season in early September about 14,500 workers are employed in Wisconsin canning plants and almost 3,500 are from out-of-state, comprising nearly 24% of the total work force.

TRENDS IN THE CHERRY INDUSTRY

Cherry production for Door County was only 12 million pounds in 1968 due to late frosts and poor pollination. This is typically a short harvest season with picking beginning around July 15, reaching a peak by approximately August 5 and terminating around August 19. Forty-five shakers were used this year, continuing a trend toward mechanization (40% of the crop was harvested by machine).

Employment service involvement in the placement of workers for cherries declined significantly this season due in part to the impact of the federal housing regulations, increased use of mechanical shakers, and a decline in the migrant work force. Seventeen-hundred migrants were employed in 1968 as compared with 2,100 in 1967.

TRENDS IN THE CUCUMBER INDUSTRY

Wisconsin pickle processors increased their contracted acreage to 18,000 acres in 1968. In spite of an increase in recruitment by the largest processor and the entry of two small pickle firms into the labor market, the number of migrants used in this crop declined to about 4,500 workers. The impact of federal housing requirements and the decision of a major processor to mechanize were contributing factors. Over 4,000 acres of cucumbers were planted for machine harvesting this year.

Wisconsin had a bumper crop this season with the volume of cucumber intake outstripping the existing processing facilities. One processor ordered a substantial percentage of their acreage disked under because the processing plant could not handle the volume of cucumbers grown. Total production for 1968 was 57,400 tons or 51% above last year's relatively small crop. Twenty-one mechanical cucumber harvesters were used in Wisconsin this year, however the quality of hand picked cucumbers still far exceeds machine-harvested cucumbers.

RECRUITMENT FOR SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD PROCESSING EMPLOYMENT

In mid-February, the Wisconsin State Employment Service sent its recruiter to Texas to begin committing workers to jobs on early job orders. During February, March and April most of the recruitment is for seasonal canning plant and cucumber harvesting labor. The volume of clearance activity in 1968 was down from previous years and also started later because of the additional preparation required to comply with the Secretary of Labor's migrant housing regulations. Orders for cherry harvest labor did not enter clearance until April and May (over a month later than usual).

Early in July two staff members were sent to Minnesota and North Dakota to contact sugar beet workers for employment in Wisconsin cucumbers, cherries and food processing. The volume of clearance activity dropped significantly between Wisconsin and these two states this past season, primarily because many Door County cherry growers were slow in getting their housing certified and employers in the cucumber harvest were holding certified housing for pre-committed crews to head off the chances of overcrowding. Another contributing factor was the decision by a major cucumber processor to recruit through a licensed private agency.

In late August and early September, Wisconsin State Employment Service representatives again participated in the recruitment of Chicago workers with the cooperation of the Illinois State Employment Service. Although smaller numbers were recruited than during the previous year, several canners continued recruitment from this source much later into the fall than usual to make up for turnover during the beet, carrot and sauerkraut pack.

A major Wisconsin canner again attempted to set up a day-haul program through the Wisconsin State Employment Service in Milwaukee. Television advertising and mass mailings were attempted but the results were disappointing.

The Wisconsin State Employment Service also sent a recruiter to Northern Illinois to recruit tomato crews for the late crops in Wisconsin. The results were not up to 1967 experiences since many workers had already left and the remaining crews seemed determined to return directly home to Texas.

To some extent, the Wisconsin State Employment Service was able to make up for late season shortages by transferring labor between canners and growers a little more successfully than former seasons. Nevertheless, some employers were under staffed during the latter part of the season. Some potato growers adjusted to their labor shortages by limiting their activities to digging and storing. Some food processors canning beets, carrots, sauerkraut and other late season products recruited from southern supply states later than usual this year because of turnover and a tight local labor market.

HOUSING

For many years, originally through the State Board of Health and more recently, through the Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations, Wisconsin had administered a reasonably strong state migrant housing code.

When the Secretary of Labor's federal migrant housing regulations went into effect in 1967, interstate recruitment assistance to employers by the Employment Service became contingent upon employer compliance with the federal regulations. Almost immediately it became apparent that some revisions of the new federal regulations were necessary to make them workable. In the meantime an advisory committee was formed in Wisconsin to review and revise the state migrant camp law. Revisions are contemplated that will ultimately make the state code as stringent as federal requirements.

WAGES

Wage information to be used as guidelines for clearing agricultural orders interstate are obtained from ES-223 In-Season Farm Labor Reports. These reports are prepared by state office field staff based on information gathered by field visits and mail-in responses from employers.

This spring, Obreros Unidos (United Workers) a migrant workers union filed a law suit against the Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations. In its action, the union contended that piece rate rules enforced by the Department deviated from the intent of the Wisconsin minimum wage law.

For many years the piece rate system of payment to workers had been considered by the Department as meeting the requirements of the state minimum wage law if it met certain tests, i.e., if 65% of the workers exceeded the minimum hourly wage by at least 9¢ per hour.

The circuit judge presiding at the trial ruled against the Department. As a result, Wisconsin employers offering piece rates are now required to keep time records and guarantee the state hourly minimum wage which is presently $1.30 per hour ($1.10 for workers age 17 and under). This applies to cucumbers, cherries and all other crops offering piece rates.

During recent years, more and more public attention has been focused upon migrants and their living and working conditions. The fact that migrants, with the exception of food processing employers, are scattered among relatively small employers and are highly mobile makes the gathering of meaningful data extremely difficult. There is a dearth of information on the subject and most of what exists is conflicting. For instance, a 1964 study of cucumber picker earnings made by the University of Wisconsin found average earnings to be $3.96 per day. United States Department of Agriculture figures for 1965 indicate that annual average earnings for migrants working 25 or more days in agriculture was $1,192. A 1967 study conducted by the Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations found that cucumber harvest earnings average $10.92 daily for adult men, $8.99 daily for women and minors over 18 and $7.04 daily for minors 17 and under. A spot check of the books of one cucumber processor during the 1968 harvest season showed that adult male workers averaged $2.17 per hour. Adding to the confusion over migrant earnings is the fact that cucumber pickers work in family groups so that daily family earnings are sometimes high, at least for limited periods of time. Confirmed reports of family earnings of $100 to $200 per day were not infrequent during the 1968 harvest.

Critics of the migrant stream state that even if family earnings are high in many cases, that fact is irrelevant, because in other segments of American life the entire family is not expected to work in order to provide for a family livelihood. They further argue that the migratory pattern is severely disrupting to the social and educational development of the migrant children.

Employers of migrants defend the migrant stream as not only necessary, but to the advantage of the migrant. It is necessary, they argue, because adequate seasonal labor is not available locally to handle peak agricultural and food processing requirements. It is to the migrant's advantage, employers claim, since it offers employment to workers who lack industrial skills, who frequently cannot speak, read, or write English, and whose home areas lack job opportunities. Even if the migrant's annual earnings are not high, employers feel they cannot be blamed because, they claim, earning potential is comparable to competitive opportunities during the period of time the migrant is employed by them. They point out that many of the migrants return year after year, and stress that this isn't always for lack of other employment opportunities. Many migrants have refused offers of permanent Wisconsin employment.

It is probable that none of the conflicting data is erroneous; that neither of the ethical positions is wrong. The lot of the migrant is as divergent as the lot of any other group of people. Errors in assessment of the migrant "problem" result from the assumption of homogeneity within the group and from the human tendency to apply middle class Anglo-Saxon values to a culture quite different from our own.

In this vein, some observations by Mr. Alcario Samudio, formerly a migrant, now Migrant Relations Specialist and Recruiter for the Wisconsin State Employment Service are included in the Attachments Section of this report. His article was originally published in the September 1968 edition of the Wisconsin Economic Indicators.

PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

At the state level, two Wisconsin State Employment Service staff members are on the State Rural Areas Development Committee and State Technical Action Panel. At the local level, district office manpower directors continue to work with advisory committees made up of labor, management, education, government and other interested officials to assist them in the determination of training needs in their areas. These committees have the responsibility of reviewing and endorsing each training proposal before it is submitted for approval.

The Wisconsin agency continues to work closely with the Governor's Committee on Migratory Labor. Committee membership is made up of representatives from labor, business, government and other interested individuals and groups. Thi continues to be a strong moving force in promoting the welfare of migratory workers.

Department of Vocational and Adult Education, Extension Service, United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS) and Wisconsin State Employment Service staff met several times during the course of the year to explore and develop relocation and training proposals for migrants. Originally visualized as a program of basic adult and vocational training for permanent farm jobs in Dodge and Fond du Lac Counties, the program was shelved because of lukewarm employer interest. A broader version of this program was also discussed for Walworth County. Industrial as well as agricultural courses were included in the Walworth County proposal. In addition, former migrants with up to several years of Wisconsin residency would be eligible to participate. At the present time however, the future of this proposal is very uncertain.

Over the years, the standard employment service migrant program of recruitment and job placement was characterized by relatively impersonal procedures involving the negotiation of hiring terms and handling of grievances through crew leaders of company recruiters. Direct dealings with workers and their dependents were relatively rare due to cultural differences and the language barrier (a majority of the migrants are Spanish-speaking). Suprisingly this communications gap was frequently as characteristic of the employer-migrant relationship as it was between the migrant and the employment service.

In 1967, the Wisconsin State Employment Service implemented a program intended to help solve this problem by assigning special seasonal staff members to areas of migrant concentration for the expressed purpose of providing information and help to workers concerning (1) protective legislation, (2) training opportunities, (3) available services from public and private agencies, (4) seasonal and permanent employment and (5) mediation of minor disputes. In most cases, contacts were made on an informal individual basis at labor camps, health clinics, receiving stations, and other gathering places for migrants.

The Wisconsin State Employment Service was encouraged by the results of this approach in 1967 and continued the program during the 1968 season. Five seasonal staff members, educators by profession, were assigned to the Wautoma area, the Beaver Dam-Fond du Lac-Manitowoc canning belt, and Door County. Four were Spanish-speaking residents of the Rio Grande Valley and the fifth was from Milwaukee.

Typical of the situations encountered this past season by our staff was the case of a young migrant family with a three-month old baby. The baby had been hospitalized previously but doctors had not been able to help him and he now weighed less than at birth. The parents were not aware of the nature of his illness. Our specialist referred the family to a volunteer doctor at a nearby clinic for help. After a week had elapsed, the baby's condition continued to worsen and the doctor didn't expect him to last over two weeks. Finally the baby was hospitalized where it was discovered that he was suffering from malnutrition. The father at first had hesitated about taking the baby to the hospital because he didn't have any money. The migrant specialist and the county nurse however, were able to make the necessary arrangements with the welfare department. The baby's health improved and arrangements were made to transfer his records to a hospital near the family's next employment. The family agreed to hospitalize the baby for further treatment at their next location.

Shyness and a limited knowledge of English frequently raised barriers between migrants and the solution to their problems. In one instance, a mother of nine children was experiencing eye trouble when contacted by one of our migrant specialists. He recommended that she contact the local migrant clinic for treatment. When the specialist returned several days later he found the mother still had not received treatment. The family had heard that the clinic did not have an eye specialist. Since they spoke no English and appeared shy, the migrant specialist offered to accompany them to the clinic.

After an examination at the clinic, the mother was referred to an eye specialist and underwent surgery shortly thereafter.

Many of the migrants' home states have different tax structures than Wisconsin. Texas, for instance, has no state income tax. The language barrier and cultural differences also create problems so migrants sometimes run into difficulty with the law. One of our specialists was instrumental in arranging for income tax deductions with an agricultural employer thereby eliminating the hardship of the workers having to pay their taxes in a lump sum during a period when many of them are unemployed. Under state and federal law, agricultural employers are normally not required to deduct for state and federal income taxes.

Misunderstandings concerning transportation charges, food costs and other payroll deductions sometimes occur between employers and their out-of-state workers. Our migrant specialists were called in on several occasions to explain insurance plans, withholding taxes and other deductions--cash advances, transportation and other charges. In instances when some of the payroll deductions worked a hardship on an employee changes were recommended by the specialists.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

In recent years, close working relationships with other public agencies and private organizations have become increasingly vital to the successful operation of the farm labor program. The Wisconsin State Employment Service and the Wisconsin Canners and Freezers Association, through a cooperative agreement, compile and publish a profile of the seasonal food processing work force in Wisconsin. The Committee on Agricultural Manpower, composed of staff from the Wisconsin State Employment Service, the Department of Agriculture, the University Extension Service, farm employers and other interested parties has jointly sponsored several county-wide farm labor clinics and distributed promotional material aimed at employers interested in getting and keeping good farm help. A statewide one-day farm labor seminar is being planned by the Committee for this February.

The Wisconsin State Employment Service migrant specialists are frequently called upon to describe their activities before civic groups and other organizations. During the peak of the season, the seasonal employment service offices prepare weekly newspaper releases on crop and labor conditions.

The Wisconsin State Employment Service Administrator serves on the advisory board for United Migrant Opportunity Services, Inc. The Madison District Manpower Director is a member of the local advisory board for United Migrant Opportunity Services' local relocation and training program.

EVALUATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In terms of responsiveness to worker and employer needs, the Wisconsin State Employment Service migrant program showed improvement during the 1968 season. By concentrating migrant operations into three centers, overall coordination of the program was simplified and the field staff were able to function with a broader view of the state's seasonal labor market.

The deep involvement of seasonal bi-lingual staff members for out-reach services to migrants (Concerted Migrant Services program) was continued this past season. This approach is at least a step in the direction of filling the communications gaps between migrants, employers and the employment service.

Some progress was also made in strengthening ties with enforcement agencies charged with protecting the interests of migrants. The Wisconsin State Employment Service migrant specialists, in the process of dealing with migrant's problems and settling disputes, frequently become involved in problems that spill over into the jurisdiction of other state agencies such as the Equal Rights Division, and the Division of Labor Standards. As a result, informal working relationships between agencies have evolved to meet these problems.

The Concerted Migrant Services approach appears to be a step in the right direction for the farm program. At the present time, a similar proposal much broader in scope, is being contemplated by the Texas Employment Commission. This project will include Wisconsin and about nine other demand states. Wisconsin also plans to continue its existing Concerted Migrant Services program in 1969.

Table 1. Selected Data on Farm Placement Operations for Wisconsin

Section A. Points Operated:	
1. Towns with day-haul points	2
2. Number of day-haul points	2
3.. Sum of days points operated	121
4. Total number of workers	1688
Section B. Services to School-Age Workers:	
5. Supervised camps	0
a. Placements in camps	0
6. Live-in farm homes	0
Section C. Services to Indians:	
7. On-reservation offices	
a. Farm placements	21
b. AHO	0
8. Other farm placements	3
Section D. Other Selected Data:	
9. Farm Clinics - offices	0
10. Farm Clinics - days	0
11. Formal Community Services Programs	5
12. Number of VFR	0

Worksheet A.

	Day-Haul Points		
Town	No.	Days Operated	Workers Transported
Milwaukee	1	58	815
West Allis	1	63	873

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TABLE 2. INTERSTATE AGRICULTURAL MIGRANT ACTIVITIES IN 1968

Section A. Migrant Contacts		
Type	By Reporting State	With Reporting State's Residents
I	II	III
1. Total	908	11
a. Crew leader	166	0
b. Family heads	598	11
c. Other	144	0

Section B. Individuals and Workers Represented	
Type	In Section A, Column III
I	II
2. Total Individuals	130
3. Total Workers	109

Section C. Worker Characteristics	
Type	Number
I	II
4. Families	1424
5. Unattached Males	687
6. Unattached Females	212

Table 3

INTERSTATE SEASONAL FOOD PROCESSING AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES FOR 1968

Wisconsin as Order-Holding State:

Applicant Holding State	Orders Extended	Orders Filled	Openings Extended	Openings Filled
Arizona	1	1	15	10
Arkansas	13	12	392	255
California	2	1	110	22
Colorado	1	1	1600	133
Idaho	1	1	1600	47
Illinois	10	8	219	173
Kentucky	3	2	140	43
Louisiana	9	7	399	247
Minnesota	17	4	2806	336
Mississippi	15	15	880	799
Missouri	10	9	369	231
Montana	3	2	1875	439
Nebraska	1	1	1600	220
New Mexico	3	3	129	76
North Carolina	1	1	50	6
North Dakota	3	3	495	401
Oklahoma	2	1	1510	2
South Dakota	3	-	1655	-
Tennessee	2	2	292	154
Texas	94	66	8181	5819
Wyoming	1	1	1600	89
Total	195	144	25,917	9502

Wisconsin as Applicant-Holding State:

Order-Holding States	Orders Received	Orders Filled	Openings Received	Openings Filled
Illinois	26	12	969	342
Indiana	5	5	423	372
Iowa	1	1	200	50
Minnesota	2	2	140	43
Ohio	70	11	2378	257
Total	105	31	4110	1064

PART II - OUTLOOK FOR 1969

Little further mechanization by the seasonal food processing industry is foreseen in the immediate future. An increase in labor needs coupled with a closer look at turnover costs and recruitment procedures is anticipated. The task of securing labor to stay the full season of approximately sixteen weeks will probably continue to be a problem. Many canners are making an effort to close the employment gap (normally a week to ten days) between the pea and corn packs. Some canners are cutting back on recruitment of out-of-state workers for the pea pack in order to minimize some of the underemployment problems experienced in 1968. The Wisconsin State Employment Service has been promoting, and will assist in a major recruitment effort in July to help build up the necessary work force for the sweet corn pack.

The amount of acreage planted for cucumbers in 1969 will be based upon decisions forthcoming from the National Pickle Packers meeting which is usually held in February. A major consideration in the decision will be the bumper crop of 1968. No large increase in the number of mechanical cucumber harvesters is anticipated this coming season.

We do not anticipate any problems in recruiting workers for cucumbers as Wisconsin now ranks as the highest paying state for this crop. However, further increases in the same rate may force complete mechanization of the harvest. At the present time workers are paid on a 50-50 piece rate basis backed up by a guaranteed hourly wage in accordance with Wisconsin Minimum Wage Regulations.

Labor requirements for truck garden vegetables will decrease despite an increase in total acreage due to new chemicals for weed control and improved planting, harvesting and handling equipment.

Nurseries, sod farms and Christmas tree operations are growing each year and will use more labor.

PART III - ATTACHMENTS TO REPORT

1. Fact Sheet - Migratory Workers in Wisconsin - 1968

2. Summary Table of Migrant Worker Specialists Activities for 1968

3. "An Ex-Migrant Speaks" by Alcario Samudio

4. Copies of Farm Labor Bulletins

FACT SHEET
MIGRATORY WORKERS IN WISCONSIN - 1968

Based on employment service registrations, monthly surveys and end of season reports it is estimated that a total of 11,200 migrant workers were employed at some time during the year in Wisconsin. These workers were accompanied by approximately 3,800 non-working dependents. This was a smaller decrease from last year's totals than we had expected. A decline in the cucumber and cherry harvest was partially offset by an increase of migrants in seasonal food processing employment.

Where are They From?

According to Wisconsin State Employment Service registrations (which represent about 80% of the total migrant population):

7240 workers claimed Texas as their home state
510 workers claimed Mississippi as their home state
210 workers claimed Tennessee as their home state
190 workers claimed Illinois as their home state
170 workers claimed Florida as their home state
150 workers claimed Louisiana as their home state
115 workers claimed Arkansas as their home state

Home states with less than 100 workers have been excluded.

What Crops Did They Work In?

(Includes Wisconsin State Employment Service registered and non-registered)

Cherries - an estimated 1,700 migrants were employed in this Door County crop. This is a drop from the 2,150 workers estimated in 1967.

Cucumbers - an estimated 4,500 migrants were employed in this crop as compared with 5,100 in 1967.

Food Processing - preliminary estimates place the migrant population in this activity at 5,800 as a result of employment service and private recruitment (up from 5,200 reported in 1967). This figure includes the in-plant and agricultural work force employed by food processors.

Sod farms - an estimated 150 migrants were employed on Wisconsin sod farms this past season.

Christmas trees - approximately 150 migrants were employed in the fall to harvest and ship Christmas trees.

Nursery work - an estimated 150 migrants were employed in this activity.

Other vegetables - an estimated 1,000 migrants cultivated and harvested potatoes, onions, mint, celery, lettuce and other vegetables on Wisconsin farms this past season.

The above totals by crops will yield a higher figure than the total number of migrants in the state since many of the workers were employed in more than one activity.

State of Last Employment
(Wisconsin State Employment Service registered migrants only)

State	Workers
Arkansas	120
California	50
Colorado	190
Delaware	170
Florida	215
Illinois	220
Indiana	75
Kentucky	65
Louisiana	150
Michigan	90
Minnesota	1870
Mississippi	235
Missouri	355
Montana	710
Nebraska	265
New Mexico	50
North Dakota	750
Ohio	50

States with less than 50 workers have been excluded.

Next Employment After Wisconsin
(Wisconsin State Employment Service registered migrants only)

State	Workers
Arkansas	65
California	50
Colorado	50
Florida	75
Illinois	545
Indiana	715
Louisiana	155
Michigan	50
Minnesota	265
Mississippi	510
Missouri	75
Montana	60
New Mexico	50
North Dakota	155
Ohio	730
Tennessee	280
Texas	5030

States with less than 50 workers have been excluded.

NOTE: All figures are rounded.

Wisconsin State Employment Service
P. O. Box 1607
Madison, Wisconsin

Migrant Specialists Activities Summary - 1968

Specialists: Bobby Johnson
Santiago Davila
Rolando Ramirez
Abel Dominguez
Neftali Serna

A.	Informational Migrant Contacts	257
B.	Community Services Contacts	78
C.	News releases, radio or television appearances	9
D.	Total health cases	115
	Number referred to clinics	101
	Number referred to hospitals	14
	Number filing Workmen's Compensation claims	8
E.	Total referred to Public Welfare	42
	Medical cases	31
	Other	11
F.	Total disputes and misunderstandings mediated	178
	Involving pay	52
	Involving working conditions	45
	Involving housing	27
	Involving other	54
G.	Referrals to Day Care and Head Start Programs	112
H.	Vocational Development Activities*	40
	Referrals to permanent jobs	28
	Referrals to vocational training.	12
I.	Other Personalized Services.	29

*22 were hired for permanent jobs and 6 undertook vocational training.

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P. O. Box 1607
Madison, Wisconsin

An Ex-Migrant Speaks

by Alcario Samudio

Alcario Samudio, Migrant Relations Specialist for the Employment Service, was a migrant until he was 18, then a foreman in charge of migrants on a vegetable farm for 11 years until he entered state service in 1967.

If you have had to move from one state to another looking for a job and depending on it, slept, you and your family, slouched on the seat of your car or on the ground, lived in cabins or shacks you can see outside from the inside through the cracks on the walls, and smell the livestock next door and the food spoiled for lack of refrigeration, worked in the rain like a duck because you had to or be kicked out, been denied the right to have visitors or friends visit you, paid wages below the legal minimum and treated with the attitude that if you don't like it, take off, when you are 1,600 miles from home on a false promise, then you have been a migrant. Once common, these conditions are now quite rare, but still exist.

There are few migrants over 30 who haven't experienced the above conditions at one time or another. But to say that this is what the migrant's life consists of would be totally wrong. We must realize that there are different kinds of migrants. They can be broken into three categories: (1) the professional, (2) the seasonal, and (3) the circumstantial migrant.

The professional migrant does very good in the course of a year. He usually travels without his family, but not always so. He follows one crop year-round and makes anywhere from $6,000 to $12,000 per person per year and as high as $16,000. Two common crops where professional migrants are employed are lettuce and onions. About 300 professional migrants work in Wisconsin at some time during the year. He usually works in various states a total of 10 or 11 months each year.

The second type of migrant, the seasonal migrant, works from 4 to 8 months out of the year, usually traveling and working with his family. This is a very common pattern: start out in April or May and harvest strawberries in Arkansas or Missouri, and then in June to the north or west to hoe sugar beets in Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Minnesota, Michigan or Ohio. Many start in this phase because sugar beets start right after school ends. Then they go to cucumbers and cherries the later part of July in Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio and Indiana. Many leave the migrant stream after this to return their children to school. About the first of September those that don't return home are moving again into the tomato fields of Illinois, Indiana and Ohio. After this crop, work opportunities drop off and they head back home before the freeze comes. A few move into other crops such as apples in Wisconsin and Michigan or Christmas trees. These migrants, as a whole, are very much aware of what is going on and adjust themselves to crops, wages and weather factors which are ever so important to the migrant. About 80 percent of these migrants make a living wage. Another 10 percent would have been better off staying home. They have large families with only a couple of workers and some are just drifters by nature. The other 10 percent are the new ones that did not move at the right time, bargain for the right amount, or just made bad job commitments. Misfortune often takes its toll in this 20 percent, such as car troubles, law, insurance and illness.

The third group, the circumstantial migrant is away from home from 1 to 4 months, often in a canning plant. They usually travel and work without their families. Frequently Mexico is their home, and they have a "green-card", which permits U. S. entry. Also in the circumstantial category is the migrant who works out-of-state only after school ends and before it starts. The circumstantial migrant is the one most apt to be found in poor employment situations, although this group also includes people who come north for little more than a paid vacation, students earning their college fees, and people who just want to get away from the 100°+ heat of the south.

Migrants are a very popular subject in Wisconsin, and very controversial. In my opinion the controversy doesn't really involve the true migrant at all, but the circumstantial migrant and the 20 percent of the seasonal migrants that don't make it when they come up north. You can't really exploit a true migrant. To them being able to stand on their own two feet is important and they won't work where they're pushed around.

This writer does not take the position that migrants are wrong in the way they live or that their jobs are ending in the very near future, because they are not. Migrants should be given every chance to leave the migrant stream if they wish. If they wish to remain in the stream, conditions, guarantees and terms of an agreement between employee and employer should be kept 100 percent. Employers must take more responsibility to prevent underemployment among the circumstantial migrants. It is very important that migrants have the same free choice enjoyed by other Americans when choosing a job. We must be sure that they know of other types of jobs, so that they can make the change as I once did. We also must be sure that we defend their right to remain migrants, especially against outside forces that are trying to "dry up" the migrant stream.

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FARM LABOR BULLETIN

June 14, 1968

The format and frequency of the Farm Labor Bulletin is changed with the 1968 season. A bulletin containing a comprehensive report of crop conditions and labor outlook will be published regularly on a monthly basis during the season. Between regular monthly reports, farm labor bulletins will be published as significant changes in crop conditions or unforeseen labor shortages or excesses occur.

The following is an analysis of the crop and labor outlook for June and early July.

GENERAL

An influx of free-wheelers and the arrival of committed workers in advance of the need for their service is causing the usual early season problem of unemployed and underemployed migrants. There will be very few opportunities for employment not already pre-arranged before the middle of July, when the cucumber and cherry harvests are expected to begin.

CHERRIES

Early predictions place the 1968 Door County cherry crop production at about 14 million pounds. The 1967 cherry production was 12.5 million pounds or about half of a normal crop. Approximately 2300 workers will be needed for the harvest. No large increase in the use of mechanical shakers is anticipated this coming season. Approximately one-third of the Wisconsin cherry crop was harvested mechanically last year.

Based on the volume of clearance order activity so far in 1968, we believe that a larger than usual number of workers in Door County will be free-wheelers this season. One of the major reasons for this is the impact of the federal housing regulations. As a result, Wisconsin State Employment Service involvement in the placement of workers is expected to decline significantly.

As a result of the increase in the Wisconsin minimum wage, the minimum piece rate for cherry picking will be 28¢ per 9 pound pail or 3.1¢ per pound.

VEGETABLES FOR PROCESSING (excluding cucumbers)

The outlook for the pea crop is good. The canning season is off to a slightly earlier start than last year with the pack beginning this week in the southern part of the state. Less than 15% of the total work force in seasonal food processing consists of interstate workers during June and July. No significant shortage of workers is anticipated during either the pea pack or the bean pack (which starts around June 24). Significant shortages are expected in the August-September crop pack.

CUCUMBERS FOR PICKLING

Wisconsin cucumber processors have indicated that they will increase their contracted acreage for this season by about 1% to 18,000 acres total. Plans of one pickle processor to mechanize, plus a reduction in recruitment by another major processor led us to early predictions that the manpower needs for the cucumber harvest would be down significantly in 1968. Recent developments, however, such as a 20% increase in recruitment by the largest processor and the entry of two small pickle firms into the labor market have changed our forecast. It now appears that the number of workers recruited for cucumbers this year will be very close to 1967 levels (about 5,000 workers). As in cherries, employment service involvement in the recruitment process is significantly reduced this year. Because state and federal housing laws will be strictly enforced, families and crews are advised not to migrate into the state without pre-arranged employment. If weather conditions continue to remain favorable for cucumber production, the harvest may commence as early as July 15.

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FARM LABOR BULLETIN

July 10, 1968

GENERAL

As a result of a recent circuit court ruling, agricultural employers in Wisconsin who offer piece-rates will not be exempted from keeping records of hours and wages paid to pickers. They must also guarantee the minimum hourly rate of $1.30 to adults and $1.10 to minors under 18. What impact this will have on the existing piece-rate structure remains to be seen.

CHERRIES

The picking and canning of early cherries is expected to start up on July 16 with volume picking beginning around July 24. Anticipated production is estimated to be between 12 to 14 million pounds. Approximately 2100 workers will be needed for the harvest. A recent survey indicates that 44 commercial shakers plus a dozen or so one-man shakers will be used this season to harvest about 40% of the crop. As a result of the impact of the federal housing regulations, WSES involvement in the placement of workers is expected to decline significantly this year.

CUCUMBERS FOR PICKLING

Crop conditions in cucumbers roughly compare to this date last year. The crop looks good and if warm weather continues, volume picking is expected to begin around July 20. Because camp operators are holding their housing in reserve for predesignated crews, it is extremely difficult at this time for WSES staff to place uncommitted crews and families.

Hail and wind damage to the fresh market vegetable crop that traditionally has provided temporary employment to early crews has reduced pre-cucumber harvest job opportunities in this area. As a result, a temporary surplus of workers is anticipated between now and the start of the cucumber harvest. Because state and federal housing laws will be strictly enforced, families and crews are advised not to migrate into the state without pre-arranged employment.

VEGETABLES FOR PROCESSING (excluding cucumbers)

After a slow start, the pea harvest is well under way. Some acreage has been by-passed. Labor for this crop is generally in balance with no critical shortages anticipated.

Planted sweet corn acreage in the state is up 9 per cent from last year at 135,600 acres according to the Wisconsin Statistical Reporting Service. At the present time the crop looks good with the exception of some water damage in the low spots. Although the corn pack is 3 to 4 weeks away, it is apparent that additional recruitment by many food processors will be necessary to compensate for the increased volume of production and the turnover expected late in the season. By mid-September, it is expected that out-of-state workers will comprise up to 30% of the total work force in the processing plants.

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FARM LABOR BULLETIN

August 15, 1968

VEGETABLES FOR PROCESSING (excluding cucumbers)

Most canning plants in southern Wisconsin are now processing corn. Reports of yield and quality are mixed--from excellent to fair with overall prospects appearing very good. Some out-of-state recruitment by canners is underway to supplement their seasonal labor force and to replace workers lost through turnover, as students return to school. Canners now report shortages of about 115 singles for in-plant work. In addition, families are needed to process carrots and beets.

Farther north in the Sheboygan and Manitowoc areas, sweet corn canning is expected to start around August 19. Chronic post Labor Day worker shortages are anticipated again this year.

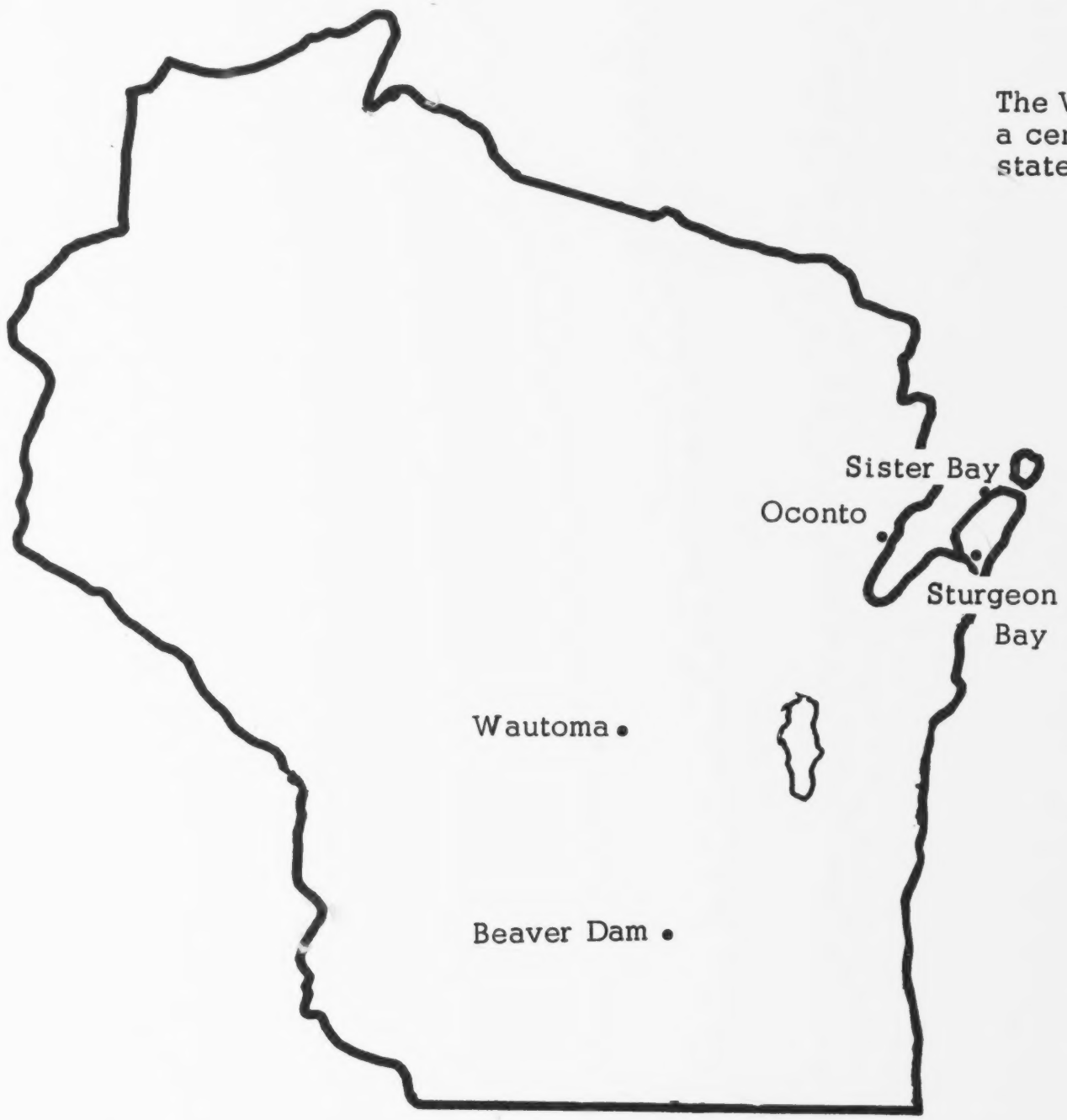
CHERRIES

The cherry harvest is nearing completion. Most crews have left the area. The Wisconsin State Employment Service seasonal offices in Sturgeon Bay and Sister Bay closed on August 15. Production for 1968 is estimated at 13 million pounds. Approximately 1700 out-of-state workers were employed in this harvest.

CUCUMBERS

The cucumber harvest is in full swing. Production has been unparalleled with worker earnings the highest in history.

The volume of intake is exceeding the capacities of the receiving stations and processing plants. Over 3500 out-of-state workers are now employed harvesting cucumbers. Labor is in balance.



MIGRANT OFFICES

The Wisconsin State Employment Service is implementing a centralized migrant program. Contact points for supply state personnel are as follows:

FOOD PROCESSING

Mr. Elwood Kiel
138 Front Street
Beaver Dam, Wisconsin 53916
Phone (414) 885-5529

AGRICULTURAL

Door County cherries and apples:
Mr. William Du Fresne, Mr. John Hovie
Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin 54235
Phone: 743-5594 Area Code 414

Mr. Ray Zimmerman
Sister Bay, Wisconsin 54234
Phone: Sister Bay 854-2815

Marinette & Oconto County Cucumbers:
Mr. Ernest Schroder
340 Jefferson Street
Oconto, Wisconsin 54153
Phone: Oconto 834-4102

All other cucumbers and agricultural activities:
Mr. Al Stamborski
Wautoma, Wisconsin 54982
Phone: (414) 787-2159